The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism

The Cultural Roots of American Islamicism explores the heritage of how Americans have long pressed orientalist images of Islam into service to globalize the authority of domestic cultural power. By delving deeply into rich and interdisciplinary archives of expression from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, the book examines how Muslim history and practices provided a contentious global horizon that Americans engaged to orient the direction of their national project, the morality of their social institutions, and the contours of their romantic imaginations. Early Americans first viewed the Islamic world as an antichristian and despotic threat but progressively revised these images into a resource for fashioning more comparative and cosmopolitan alternatives. Readers will better understand how long-held habits of intercultural perception have shaped present impasses between the United States and the Muslim world.

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for Paula
# Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figures</th>
<th>page ix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>xi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Imagining Ishmael: Introducing American Islamicism  
1. Islamicism and Counterdespotism in Early National Cultural Expression  20  
2. “Drying Up the Euphrates”: Muslims, Millennialism, and Early American Missionary Enterprise  82  
3. Antebellum Islamicism and the Transnational Crusade of Antislavery and Temperance Reform  134  
4. “Turkey Is in Our Midst”: Mormonism as an American “Islam”  185  
5. American Ishmael: Herman Melville’s Literary Islamicism  219  
6. Turning Turk: The Gendered Pageantry of Mid-Nineteenth-Century Islamicism  262  

Index  299
Figures

0.1 John Smith’s Bashing of the Bashaw of Nalbrits from the True Travels (1630).

1.1 Valentine Verax, “The Allied Despots. Or The Friendship of Britain for America” (20 February 1794).

1.2 An Affecting History of the Captivity and Sufferings of Mrs. Mary Velnét (Boston 1804).


1.4 An Attempt to Analyse the Automation Chess Player of Mr. De Kempelin (London: Booth, 1821).

1.5 Detail from the 1808 Naval Monument (Tripoli Monument) on the grounds of the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.


2.2 Section of A Chronological Chart of the Visions of Daniel and John (Boston c. 1843).

2.3 Illustration of “Afghaun” as one of the “Kings of the East” of Revelation 16:12.


3.2 “The Turks are a grave people” from the book for children People of Different Countries (New York 1837).

4.1 Illustrations from Boudica; The Mormon Wife. Life Scenes in Utah (1855).

5.1 Herman Melville’s Turkish Slippers.

6.1 Portrait of Nicholas Boylston by John Singleton Copley (1767).

6.2 Portrait of Amos Lawrence by Chester Harding (1845).


6.4 Portrait of Bayard Taylor by Edward Hicks (1855).

6.5 Advertisement card for the Boston-built clipper ship Akbar.

6.6 Hiram Powers, “The Greek Slave” (1847).
List of Figures

6.7 Amelia Bloomer in Turkish Trousers, The Water-Cure Journal 12 (October 1851), 96. 284

6.8 Zouave Soldiers in Company G, 114th Pennsylvania Infantry, Petersburg, Virginia, August 1864. 290

6.9 Winslow Homer, Zouave. 291

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